

Fresh Slaughter Erupts In Congo

LEOPOLDVILLE, The Congo (AP) — Belgian paratroopers landed and seized rebel Paulis in a swift daybreak strike today but not until white hostages were mowed down as savagely as at Stanleyville.

Unofficial reports said 50 of the 300 white hostages in Paulis were killed. One of the dead was an American.

The paratroopers landed in U. S. transport planes without the preliminary airdrop to secure the airfield, the technique used in the liberation of Stanleyville Tuesday. Four of the seven U. S. planes used in the operation were hit by ground fire.

There was brief fighting in this last rebel stronghold in the northeast Congo and at least one Belgian paratrooper was killed and five wounded before the town was seized in about two hours.

The U. S. C130 transports began ferrying the rescued whites to Stanleyville and Leopoldville, the Congo capital.

One of the first refugees to be brought out said that he knew of 17 hostages who were herded into a Dominican mission and beaten to death.

Most of them were Belgians, according to the refugee, T. Boeykens, a Belgian. But he said one was the Rev. Joseph Tucker, an Assembly of God missionary of Springfield, Mo.

Tucker's wife and three children were reported safe in Paulis and were scheduled to be evacuated.

A U. S. Embassy spokesman here said about three other Americans were in the Paulis vicinity. Their identity was not known.

The paratroopers landed at the Paulis Airport, then moved into town after meeting sharp rebel resistance around the airfield.

Intensive groundfire hit four of the seven U.S. Air Force C130 transport planes in the operation but all were reported to have landed safely. One paratrooper was killed and five injured.

A U.S. Embassy spokesman here said the Belgians had "secured" the town in about two hours. Rebel sniper fire was continuing, however.

The Belgians shepherded the first group of whites aboard a transport plane for evacuation to Leopoldville. The flight included 34 men, 1 woman and 19 children.

The embassy spokesman said 267 paratroopers were flown to Paulis, 244 miles north of Stanleyville.

American and Belgian military officers kept the other 350 Belgian paratroopers at Stan-

Today's dramatic rescue operation was the second and apparently final operation by the Belgian and American forces in the Congo.

In Washington, high U.S. officials said the next move would be to get the paratroop units out of the troubled central African country as quickly as possible.

In the first rescue mission Tuesday, the paratroopers were flown from Kamina Air Base near Leopoldville and quickly freed about 1,150 white hostages at Stanleyville, the rebel capital.

The paratroopers made a few excursions through the surrounding countryside, then were pulled back to the Stanleyville airport.

Mop-up operations were being
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SLAUGHTER—

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conducted in the Stanleyville area by 650 Katanga gendarmes and 210 white mercenaries who spearheaded the ground drive against Christophe Gbenye's Communist-supported rebels.

Faced with mounting charges by Communist nations of armed intervention, the United States and Belgium wanted to make it clear the paratroopers had been used only to save the lives of the hostages.

In Washington, the U.S. State Department said that the Paulis move, like that at Stanleyville, was deemed necessary strictly for humanitarian reasons.

"The rescue mission within Stanleyville has now been completed and the paratroop force withdrawn to the Stanleyville airport area," the announcement said. "Only limited search

activity continues in outlying areas around Stanleyville for the few remaining possible evacuees.

"In the last 24 hours, however, it has been clear that rebel groups have collected a large number of hostages 225 miles to the north at or near Paulis.

"Reports indicate that this group comprising perhaps several hundred foreign civilians — men, women and children, including seven Americans — is in imminent peril."

"In order to complete the evacuation mission as rapidly as possible and minimize further loss of life, a part of the paratroops force has therefore been flown to Paulis."

While some of the Paulis refugees were to be flown directly to Leopoldville, 800 miles away, provision was made for some of

the evacuation flights to stop in Stanleyville to pick up other white refugees.

A Belgian Foreign Office spokesman said the Paulis operation should be completed today and the paratroopers would be returned to Stanleyville.

Plans were for the paratroopers to be quickly pulled back to Kamina. Sources said they would be flown from the Congo within 48 hours.

As the new rescue attempt proceeded, the second plane load of refugees from Stanleyville arrived in Brussels. They brought the same stories of terror and bloodshed at the hands of the rebels as the first arrivals Wednesday.

King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola of Belgium were at the airport to greet the 20 refugees and 3 wounded paratroopers on the plane.

Among the refugees was a nun, Sister Anne Marie Merckens, who told King Baudouin of beatings, rape and forced marches naked in the streets of the city of Basoko in the Stanleyville area.

Baudouin listened grimly.

Later she repeated her story for newsmen. With tears in her eyes she said: "We were locked up in a small dungeon at Basoko. We were about 25, among them 18 nuns.

"Time and again, rebels came to beat us. They stripped us of our clothes and forced us to march naked in the streets amid jeering Congolese. They kept asking us to sleep with them. As we repeatedly refused, some of us were raped."

"Later an order came to bring us to Stanleyville."

With the last of the whites leaving Stanleyville, the huge province becomes a hollow prize for Congolese Premier Moise Tshombe's troops.

The rebels have laid waste to the economic underpinnings by driving out most of the 1,600 white businessmen, planters and others who were the mainstay of its wealth. Thousands of Congolese were slaughtered.